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ABSTRACT

This 1999 technical report looks at California Early Literacy Learning (CELL) and Extended Literacy Learning (ExLL), professional development programs designed to help elementary teachers strengthen their teaching of reading and writing. It notes that research-based teaching methodologies have been organized into a framework for classroom instruction that stresses and encourages active participation from each child regardless of his or her current level of literacy acquisition. The report is divided into the following sections: Overview; CELL Framework ; ExLL Framework; Major Components of CELL and ExLL; Training Model; Research; Implementation; Collaborations and Partnerships; and Literacy Coordinators. Contains 9 tables of data and 154 references. (RS)

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CALIFORNIA EARLY LITERACY LEARNING

EXTENDED LITERACY LEARNING

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Our Most Important Job
Is To Teach Children To Read And Write

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OVERVIEW

California Early Literacy Learning (CELL) and Extended Literacy Learning (ExLL) are professional development programs designed to help elementary teachers strengthen their teaching of reading and writing. Research-based teaching methodologies are organized into a framework for classroom instruction. CELL training (PreKindergarten-Grade 3) emphasizes that the instructional focus in the primary grades is to teach reading and writing. ExLL (Grades 3-6) focuses on reading and writing in the content areas while recognizing that some children in the intermediate grades are still struggling readers.

Both California Early Literacy Learning and Extended Literacy Learning are designed to help teachers meet the needs and strengths of each individual child. The model stresses and encourages active participation from each child regardless of his or her current level of literacy acquisition. High progress children are encouraged to continue their rapid growth while low progress children are guided through the process with continuous support and an opportunity to accelerate their learning. The opportunity to try new learning in a risk-free environment and practice new strategies throughout the day are encouraged.

Teachers are trained to use a gradual decline of teacher support and a gradual increase in student independence based on demonstrated student capability. This reduction of teacher support is based on observations of individual child growth in understanding the process of literacy. The child's use of a variety of problem-solving strategies is supported through good teacher decision-making about ways to assist each child toward the goal of independence. The elements of the CELL and ExLL instructional frameworks are designed to help each child and the whole class move together toward that goal. The frameworks have been designed to structure classrooms that use literacy activities throughout the day of every school day. Other curricular areas are delivered using literacy activities as the method of instruction. The CELL and ExLL frameworks include oral language, phonology, higher-order thinking skills, and reading and writing activities.

California Early Literacy Learning and Extended Literacy Learning have been developed with the strong belief that improved classroom instruction and increased student achievement are best achieved by providing more support and professional development for teachers. Helping teachers become more effective in their work is the primary goal of CELL and ExLL. The CELL and ExLL training programs are based on a high level of confidence in the ability of classroom teachers to become more powerful in their teaching, given appropriate training and long term support.

The frameworks have been designed to structure classrooms that use literacy activities throughout the day of every school day.

California Early Literacy Learning (CELL)

. CELL (PreK-3) helps primary teachers learn how to use the framework effectively in their classrooms and how to integrate the individual elements into an overall system of classroom instruction. Oral language is the foundation for all of the elements of early literacy learning. The dialogue, discussion, verbal interaction, and active oral engagement of each child are stressed as each of the framework elements is used. Knowledge of the structure of language is known to increase with communication that occurs surrounding the literature that is read aloud and the themes that are studied across the curriculum of the classroom. The practice of oral language and the development of new vocabulary through discussion and reading from a broad range of genre are reciprocal in nature. Skills development is also emphasized across each of the framework elements. Emergent readers must have the opportunity to develop phonemic awareness and to practice phonological strategies and decoding skills. These skills are best acquired in the context of meaningful activities and should be given extensive practice by reading quality literature and engaging in authentic writing activities.

The elements of the CELL framework provided during the inservice training are reviewed and discussed by both experienced and new teachers from a participating elementary school. Schoolwide staff development is provided by a specially trained Literacy Coordinator skilled in both the theory and practice of effective literacy learning. Literacy Coordinators also provide peer coaching to assist teachers in taking on the new learning and instructional methodologies of the CELL framework.

The PreK-3 Framework is carefully designed to help the beginning reader develop the necessary skills to master alphabetic principle, phonemic awareness, and concepts about print in a literature-rich environment.

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CELL FRAMEWORK FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

ORAL LANGUAGE Assists students in language acquisition Develops and increases vocabulary Promotes the use of accurate language structure	Bruner (1983); Cazden (1992); Chomsky (1972); Ferreiro & Teberosky (1982); Holdaway (1979); Wells (1986)
PHONOLOGICAL SKILLS Uses oral language to access reading and writing Builds a foundation of phonemic awareness for explicit skills learning Teaches systematic phonics through writing, spelling, and reading Supports development of accurate spelling	Adams (1998); Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston (1996); Kirk, Kirk, & Minskoff (1985); Shook, Klein, & Swartz (1998)
READING ALOUD Builds vocabulary Introduces good children's literature through a variety of genre Increases repertoire of language and its use	Adams (1990); Clark (1976); Cochran-Smith (1984); Cohen (1968); Durkin (1966); Goodman, Y. (1984); Green & Harker (1982); Hiebert (1988); Huck, Hepler, & Hickman (1994); Ninio (1980); Pappas & Brown (1987); Schickedanz (1978); Wells (1985)
SHARED READING Promotes the development of early reading strategies Encourages cooperative learning and child-to-child support Stresses phonemic awareness and phonologic skills	Holdaway (1979); Martinez & Roser (1985); Pappas & Brown (1987); Rowe (1987); Snow (1983); Sulzby (1985); Teale & Sulzby (1986)
GUIDED READING Allows observation of strategic reading in selected novel texts Provides direct instruction of problem-solving strategies Allows for classroom intervention of reading difficulties	Clay (1991a; 1991b); Holdaway (1979); Lyons, Pinnell, & Deford (1993); McKenzie (1986); Routman (1991); Wong, Groth, & O'Flahavan (1994); Fountas & Pinnell (1996)
INDEPENDENT READING Allows children to practice strategies being learned Develops fluency using familiar texts Encourages successful problem solving	Clay (1991a); McKenzie (1986); Taylor (1993)
INTERACTIVE WRITING Provides an opportunity to jointly plan and construct text Develops letter-sound correspondence and spelling Teaches phonics	Pinnell & McCarrier (1994); Button, Johnson, & Furgerson (1996)
INDEPENDENT WRITING Encourages writing for different purposes and different audiences Fosters creativity and an ability to compose	Bissex (1980); Clay (1975); Dyson (1982; 1988); Ferreiro & Teberosky (1982); Goodman, Y. (1984); Harste, Woodward, & Burke (1984)

EXTENDED LITERACY LEARNING (ExLL)

ExLL (Grades 3-6) training supports intermediate teachers in learning how to effectively teach reading and writing to students with a wide range of ability levels in the intermediate grades. It is aligned with the CELL framework and helps teachers learn how to integrate the individual elements into a seamless curriculum of classroom instruction. The active engagement of each child is stressed throughout the ExLL framework, with verbal interaction and reading and writing activities taught across the content fields. Knowledge of the structure of the language, new vocabulary and concepts are developed through literature and the study of genre across themes in the curriculum. Ongoing skills development at a higher level of phonological analysis is balanced with systematic, direct instruction of decoding and comprehension for struggling readers. These skills are acquired in the context of meaningful activities that motivate the gifted and reluctant reader alike. Students are given extensive practice by reading a wide range of fiction and nonfiction books and engaging in authentic writing activities in all content areas.

ExLL FRAMEWORK FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

PHONOLOGICAL SKILLS Directly and systematically teaches essential skills • Uses oral language to access reading and writing • Builds a foundation of explicit skills learning • Teaches systematic phonics through writing, spelling, and reading • Supports development of accurate spelling	Adams (1990); Blau (1998); Brady & Moats (1997); Cunningham & Stanovich (1998); Cunningham (1990); Duffelmery & Black (1996); Foorman, Francis, Shaywitz, Shaywitz, & Fletcher (1997); Fry (1998); Fry (1997); Liberman, Shankweiler, & Liberman (1989); Lowe & Walters (1991); Lowery (1998); Lyon & Moats (1997); McPike (1995); Moats (1994); Morris, Ervin, & Conrad (1996); Shaywitz (1996); Stanovich (1993); Tierney (1998); Torgesen (1998); Torgesen, Wagner, & Rashotte (1997); Triplett & Stahl (1998); Wolfe (1998)
READING ALOUD Expands concept development and language structure • Fluent, expressive reading • New and familiar concepts and context • Language and grammar usage	Andrews (1998); Barrentine (1996); Schickendanz (1978)
SHARED READING Increases fluency and extends phonological awareness • Phonological awareness for explicit skills learning • Choral reading • Reader's theater	Beck, McKeown, & Ormanson (1997); Blum & Koskinen (1991); Clark (1995); Dowhower (1991); Hasbrouck & Tindal (1992); Miller (1998); Nathan & Stanovich (1991); Samuels, Schermer, & Reinking (1992); Samuels (1997); Tangel & Blachman (1995)

ExLL FRAMEWORK FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION (Continued)

DIRECTED READING Provides explicit skills and comprehension instruction for readers at various ability levels, integrates reading into the content areas, and teaches study and reference skills • Guided reading • Reciprocal teaching • Literature circles	Beck, McKeown, Hamilton, & Kucan (1998); Brown & Cambourne (1990); Chomsky (1976); Fletcher & Lyon (1998); Gilliam, Peña, & Mountain (1980); Jones, Coombs, & McKinney (1994); Juel (1988); Klein (1981); Klein (1996); Klein (1997); Lee & Neal (1993); Pearson, Roehler, Dole, & Duffy (1992); Perfetti (1995); Shanklin & Rhodes (1989); Showers, Joyce, Scanlon, & Schnaubelt (1998); Stahl & Shiel (1992); Tomlinson & Kalbfleisch (1998); Weir (1998)
INDEPENDENT READING Allows for extended practice, increased comprehension, and higher-order thinking skills • Specific reading strategies and text organization • Content area study	Anderson (1996); Henk & Melnick (1995); Metzger (1998)
DIRECTED WRITING Supports the accurate construction of text and effective spelling strategies • Interactive writing and interactive editing • Writer's workshop	Ehri (1998); Fletcher & Lyon (1998); Foorman, Francis, Fletcher, Schatschneider, & Metha (1998); Greene (1998); Heald-Taylor (1998); Henry (1988); Invernizzi, Abouzeid, & Bloodgood (1997); Moats (1998); Juel (1988); Zutell (1996)
INDEPENDENT WRITING Encourages creativity and the ability to write for different purposes • Language structure and correct grammar usage • Accurate spelling and punctuation skills	Cassady (1998)
ORAL PRESENTATION Formalizes the process of sharing ideas and reporting information • Content area oral reports • Oral interpretation of literature • Drama/performance	California Department of Education (1998); Klein (1997)

The ExLL 3-6 Framework is aligned with the CELL Framework and is designed to help the wide range of readers in the intermediate grades extend their essential skills while reading and writing in the content areas.

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF CELL AND EXLL

California Early Literacy Learning and Extended Literacy Learning share a number of components that have been found important to their success and essential to effective implementation. Participants have reported that CELL and ExLL are a unique blend of intensive professional development that matches theory and practice and supports new learning by teachers.

CELL recognizes that the teaching of reading and writing is the foundation for all later academic achievement. Teachers are encouraged to teach all subjects using the framework of literacy activities. ExLL continues this emphasis in the intermediate grades with the additional focus of using reading and writing in the content areas.

CELL and ExLL also restructure how we teach children to read and write. Schools who join the projects have determined the need to change their approach to teaching reading and writing. Schools are committed to providing massive opportunities for children to practice reading and writing. Teachers are encouraged to use literacy activities as their primary teaching method, all day, every day.

National and various state level legislative initiatives emphasize that improving reading and writing in elementary schools is a high priority. California Early Literacy Learning and Extended Literacy Learning help schools meet this goal by providing professional development that helps teachers be more effective in providing literacy instruction. The teaching of phonemic awareness, systematic, explicit phonics instruction, sound/symbol relationships, decoding, word attack skills, spelling instruction, and diagnosis of reading deficiencies are all emphasized. Training sessions also provide a multitude of authentic and literature-rich teaching methodologies for use in primary and intermediate classrooms.

The inservice trainings also incorporate research on how children learn to read, how proficient readers read, the structure of the English language, and the relationship between reading, writing, and spelling. Teachers are provided a means to plan and deliver appropriate reading and writing instruction based on assessment and evaluation using independent student reading of high quality books. Reading instruction is based on improving reading performance and comprehension. The reciprocal nature of reading and writing is emphasized.

CELL and ExLL are balanced reading and writing programs that combine skills development with literature and language-rich activities. Children are provided direct instruction using high quality, appropriate materials. Teaching methods are used that have substantial support in the research literature. Teaching methods are aligned within and across grade levels. Achievement gains are enhanced when transition from grade to grade is accompanied by teachers who use the same teaching methods. Classroom instruction, early intervention, and special education are also aligned.

CELL and ExLL collect diagnostic information to inform instruction and assessment data to ensure accountability. Teachers are trained in various assessment procedures to improve their observation of children to better inform instruction. Standardized test measures are used to track both individual student and class achievement.

The training model provides intensive professional development with follow-up. School-Based Planning Team and Literacy Coordinator training are both year-long. Follow-up support for the three to five year implementation is provided through on-site training, class visits, and monthly guided meetings.

A capacity-building model that ensures long-term support is used. The School-Based Planning Team and the school-based Literacy Coordinator both help establish a system of support that continues year after year. CELL and ExLL also provide long-term support through continuing professional development opportunities during periodic training updates and at the Annual West Coast Literacy Conference and the Rocky Mountain Literacy Conference.

High quality teaching materials from a wide variety of sources are used during the training. Professional books and an extensive list of professional readings are provided during training. Recommendations for children's literature books and books for shared and guided reading are available. The effective use of other materials, such as basal reading series, is also included in the training.

CELL and ExLL have been reported as successful with second language learners. Schools report that the frameworks have been effective in English only classes, Spanish only classes, and classes for second language learners. Book lists used in CELL are available in both English and Spanish.

CELL and ExLL success is measured by student performance. Intensive staff development and ongoing support should be a condition of teacher accountability. Data reported in the research section show various procedures used to document success.

Major Components of CELL and ExLL

Increase the emphasis on reading and writing in the curriculum

Focus on the professional development of teachers

Support school reform and school restructuring

Use a balanced reading and writing program supported by scientific research

Align teaching methods within and across grade levels

Use a capacity-building model

Measure success by student achievement gains

School-Based Planning Teams

To ensure schoolwide support, a School-Based Planning Team participates in a year-long series of planning activities and framework training sessions. The School-Based Planning Team is composed of the school principal, a reading specialist, a special education teacher, and teachers from each grade.

The teachers from each team receive initial training in the elements of the framework and begin implementation of the framework immediately after the first session. They receive feedback regarding their efforts at each subsequent session. This format allows a school to begin partial implementation and develop a resource for observation, demonstration, and support of the project.

Training for these sessions is provided by the CELL and ExLL training staff and the team of trained Literacy Coordinators. School-Based Planning Team training sessions include five full-day activities (two additional assessment training days for CELL teams) and attendance at either the West Coast Literacy Conference or the Rocky Mountain Literacy Conference. The training sessions focus on systematic observation of children's learning and specific instruction in the effective use of elements of the CELL and ExLL frameworks. Between training sessions teams participate in guided meetings at their school site. Guided meetings are an opportunity for further study and collegial support.

The School-Based Planning Team also works together during the training days to develop a vision for future literacy instruction in their school. Planning for long-term professional development over the next three to five years is a role of the School-Based Planning Team at each school. Supporting the Literacy Coordinator while in-training is another function of each School-Based Planning Team. The Literacy Coordinator-in-training practices observation skills and peer coaching with the School-Based Planning Team members.

ROLE OF THE TEAM

Support implementation by:

- Beginning to practice the elements of the framework daily in your classroom.
- Learning the theoretical constructs of literacy learning through professional reading.
- Making decisions on how the implementation of literacy instruction can be supported and extended throughout your school.
- Attending and actively participating in all training days.
- Helping to coordinate guided meetings at the school site.
- Supporting colleagues on the team as they attempt new learning.
- Reflecting on your own teaching.

Literacy Coordinator

The Literacy Coordinator is the school-based staff developer who supports the implementation of the CELL and ExLL frameworks. This individual has no supervisory responsibility, but rather serves as a coach and mentor to colleagues on the instructional team. There is a separate and distinct training for CELL and ExLL Literacy Coordinators because of the varied needs of primary and intermediate teachers.

The Literacy Coordinator-in-training participates in five full-week trainings (Sunday through Friday) throughout the traditional school year. This training consists of observations in classrooms, group meetings to reflect on the teaching and learning observed, and seminars that combine theory and practice. Throughout the year, the Literacy Coordinator-in-training teaches a half-day in a classroom using the elements of the framework and attends biweekly guided meetings. In addition to teaching a half-day in their own classrooms, the Literacy Coordinators support the continued learning of the School-Based Planning Team by observing in classrooms half days and conducting awareness sessions with the rest of the instructional team.

Literacy Coordinators also receive leadership training that focuses on peer coaching and the construction of the staff development model. One of the major strengths of the CELL and ExLL model is the effectiveness of peer coaching. The Literacy Coordinators use their classrooms for demonstration opportunities for their colleagues. It is recommended that a Literacy Coordinator have responsibility for supporting approximately twenty teachers. Additional Literacy Coordinators are recommended for larger schools.

For smaller schools it is possible to combine the CELL and ExLL training so that one Literacy Coordinator can support grades PreK-6. This extended training model requires completion of CELL and ExLL School-Based Planning Team training, CELL Literacy Coordinator training, and a supplemental three week training in the ExLL Framework.

Training Schedules

CELL and ExLL implementation has three distinct phases. During the first phase, School-Based Planning Teams are trained. This training helps establish the culture for change in the school and provides an initial training for team members. During phase two, a Literacy Coordinator is trained to provide support to team members. This position is an important part of the capacity-building effort for the school. In the final phase, phase three, teachers who were not part of the School-Based Planning Team are trained. The Literacy Coordinator begins full implementation at the site by providing the five day training sequence with observations in the classrooms of the School-Based Planning Team and in the classroom taught by the Literacy Coordinator.

The training model is designed to make elementary schools self-sustaining through the training of Literacy Coordinators who can provide professional development and peer coaching to teachers in their own schools. This capacity-building model has been found to support long term change in participating schools.

Different schedules of training and implementation are used by various schools. Some schools choose to complete School-Based Planning Team training in the same year as the training of their Literacy Coordinator. Full implementation using this schedule begins in year two. Other schools choose to train a team in year one, a Literacy Coordinator in year two, and begin full implementation in year three. Likewise, participation in CELL and ExLL trainings vary across schools. Some schools train teams and Literacy Coordinators in CELL and ExLL at the same time. Other schools have initiated CELL training and progressed into ExLL training in a subsequent year.

Implementation Schedule

School-Based Planning Team

- Assessment Training
  - CELL (Two-day workshop)
  - ExLL (during training days)
- 5 One-day Training Sessions
- Monthly Guided Meetings
- West Coast or Rocky Mountain Literacy Conference

Literacy Coordinator Training

- Assessment Training
  - CELL (Two-day workshop)
  - ExLL (during training days)
- Monthly Guided Meetings
- 5 Week-Long Training Seminars
- 3 Interim Training Days
- Monthly Colleague Meetings
- West Coast Literacy Conference

Schoolwide Training

- Assessment Training
  - CELL (Two-day workshop)
  - ExLL (during training days)
- 30 Hours Training for Staff
- Biweekly Guided Meetings
- West Coast or Rocky Mountain Literacy Conference

RESEARCH

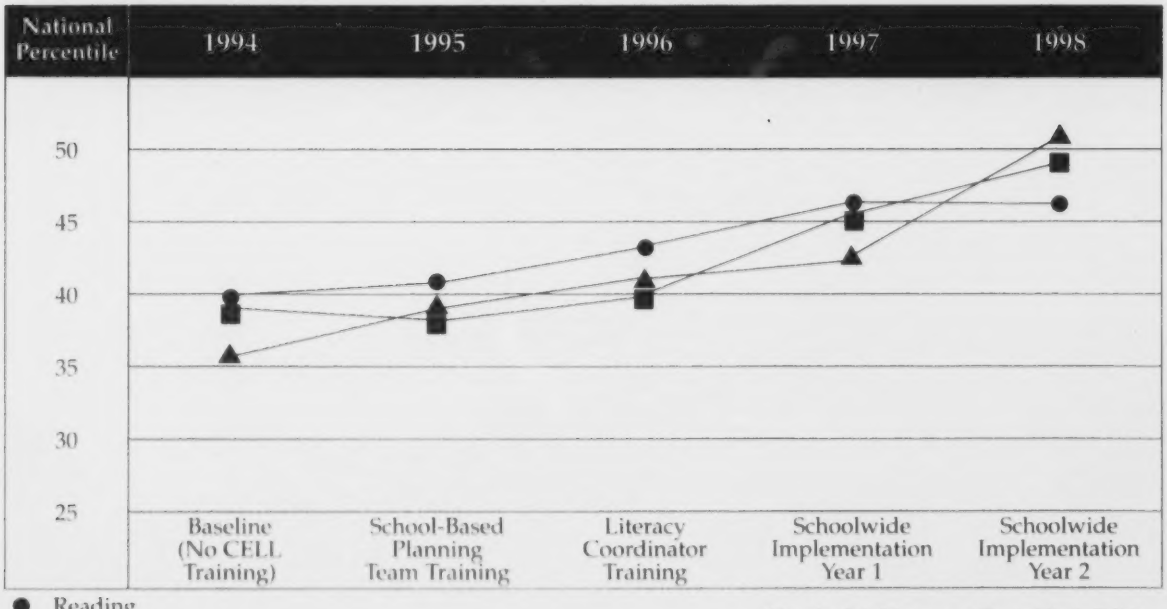
California Early Literacy Learning and Extended Literacy Learning are research-based programs. This research is reflected in both the selection of training components as well as the collection of data from participating schools. All elements of the frameworks were selected because of their substantial support in the research literature. The frameworks represent best practices in literacy learning. Participants assist in the collection of data that are used to document program success and individual student gains. It is a primary focus of CELL and ExLL research to analyze and report data generated by individual participating schools and districts. This research focus is a more reliable predictor of the likely impact of CELL and ExLL training on achievement in a particular school than a set of aggregated data from all CELL and ExLL participants.

Specific focus is given to the standardized test scores of each participating school. In addition to the language arts test results, content area scores are also monitored to determine the impact of increased literacy learning on achievement in mathematics and other subject matter. In addition, as soon as possible after the opening of school, approximately six children chosen at random from each classroom, are individually assessed, using various measures as a pretest. The posttest for this same group is completed in the last three weeks of school. This procedure is used to monitor specific learning in a group of focus children at each grade level.

The primary goal of California Early Literacy Learning and Extended Literacy Learning is to increase the literacy achievement of children. Table 1 is a longitudinal study of student achievement over a five year period. A steady trajectory of growth is seen from the 1994 baseline of no training to the second year of full implementation in 1998 with scores in the average range. This growth was seen in reading and language arts as well as in mathematics.

Table 1

Sustained Growth on SAT-9 in Reading, Language Arts and Mathematics Achievement in a Four Year CELL Implementation – Summary of scores for grades 3-5*



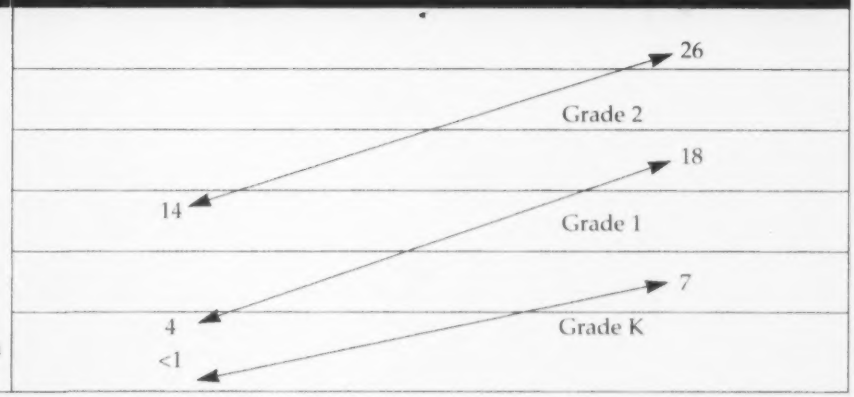
*Stanford Achievement Test - Ninth Edition
Riverton, Wyoming Title I School

Table 2 shows Fall and Spring Observation Survey (Clay, 1993) mean scores and grade equivalents in text reading for children in grades K-2 at a fully implemented CELL school. Kindergarten students began the year as non-readers and reached a level equivalent to mid-first grade by the Spring testing. Achievement of first-graders increased from upper Kindergarten to beginning second, and second-graders began the year just below grade level and scored high fourth grade in the Spring testing. These randomly selected children received no intervention or support services other than effective classroom teaching using the CELL framework.

An additional research focus is the impact of teacher training. Table 3 reports a study completed where half of the staff participated in training and the other half served as a control group who received no training. Significant increases in text reading scores were reported in each grade level for teachers who participated in training compared to those who received no training.

Table 2
Mean Text Reading Scores for Fall and Spring – Focus Child Testing

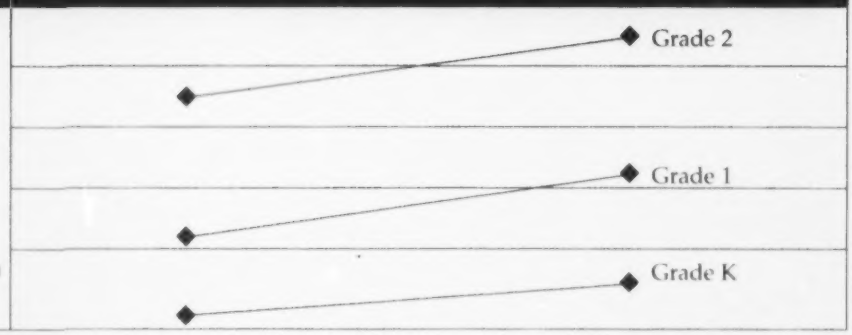
Text Reading Level*	Grade Level Equivalent	Fall	Spring
25	4th Grade		
20	3rd Grade		
15	2nd Grade		
10	1st Grade		
5			
0	Kindergarten		



Implementation Year One School, Northern California, 1996. *Observation Survey

Table 3
Year End Mean Text Reading Scores for Training Group and Control Group

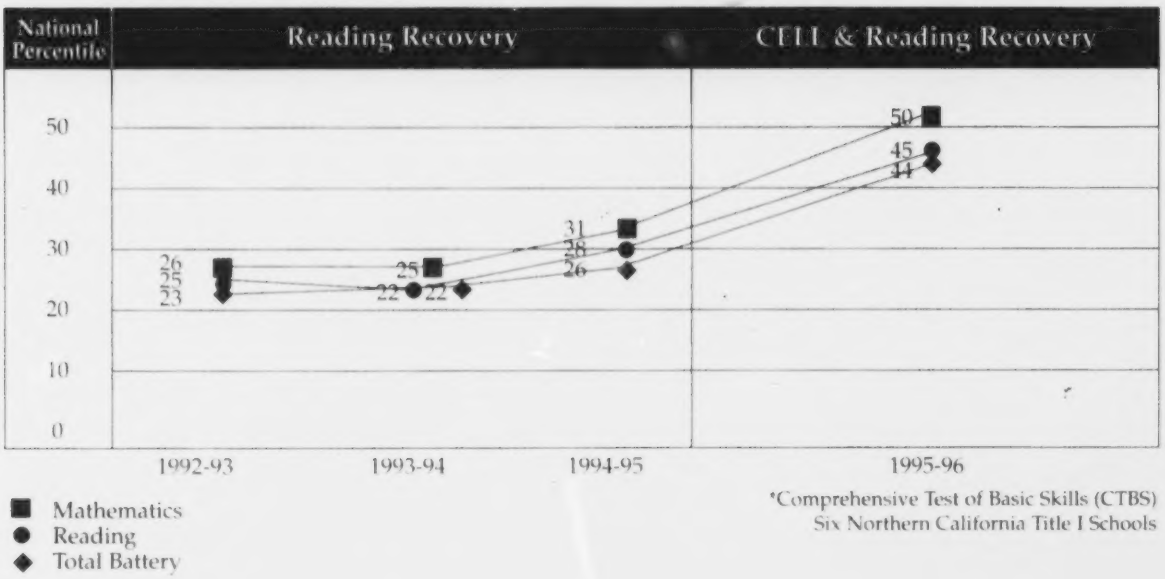
Text Reading Level*	Grade Level Equivalent	Control	Trained
20	3rd grade		
15	2nd grade		
10	1st grade		
5			
0	Kindergarten		



Wyoming Indian School (N=200), 1996. *Observation Survey

Table 4

Impact of California Early Literacy Learning (CELL) on Standardized Test Scores for First Graders in Schools with Reading Recovery*



*Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)
Six Northern California Title I Schools

Many schools who have selected CELL as a professional development program also participate in the Reading Recovery (Clay, 1979) program. Though Reading Recovery, by design, is an intervention and not expected to impact the cohort, many districts track these data. Table 4 shows standardized test data for first graders over a four year period in mathematics, reading, and total battery. The three years of data during Reading Recovery participation yielded scores in the 22-31 national percentile range. Year end scores following the first year of CELL implementation showed a dramatic increase in all three areas to the 44-50 percentile range. The achievement increase was also seen in mathematics. These data help support the primary importance of reading and writing instruction in the elementary grades. It also suggests that even a powerful intervention like Reading Recovery improves with the support of effective classroom teaching.

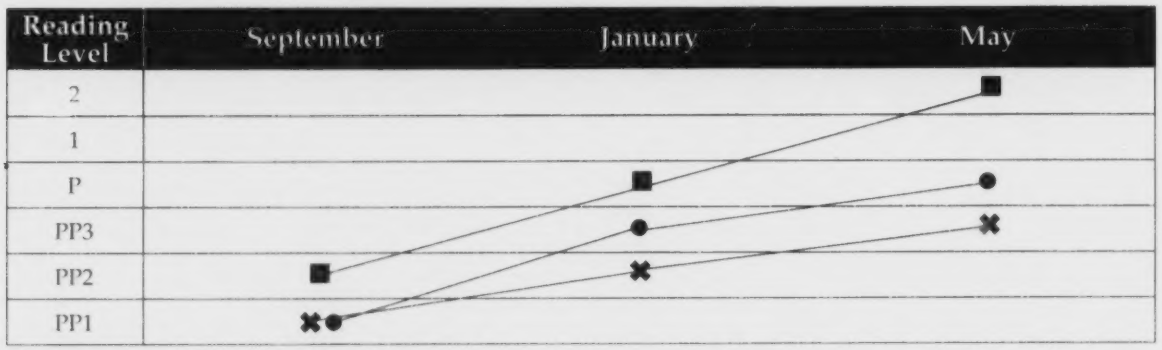
Table 5 also has data that compare Reading Recovery implementation and CELL implementation. In addition, it compares CELL implementation at the School-Based Planning Team level and the Literacy Coordinator level. The benefits of full CELL implementation are demonstrated in this study as well as the benefits of a school-based staff developer.

It is hoped that powerful instruction and access to good first teaching for all children will impact the need for remedial reading and special education services. Table 6 reports special education referrals over a three year period. Non-Title I schools with neither Reading Recovery nor CELL support showed an increase in percentage of referral from 2.6 to 3.7. Title I schools supported by Reading Recovery showed a referral reduction from 3.0 to 2.8 percent. The demonstration school supported by Reading Recovery and CELL showed a significant reduction in referrals to special education from 3.2 to 1.5. These data confirm both the effective combination of a balanced program of reading and writing instruction with a powerful early intervention and the cost effectiveness of schoolwide training in CELL.

One of the CELL demonstration schools was able to exit eight of 32 children from special education resource placement during 1997-98 after two years of CELL implementation. The district

Table 5

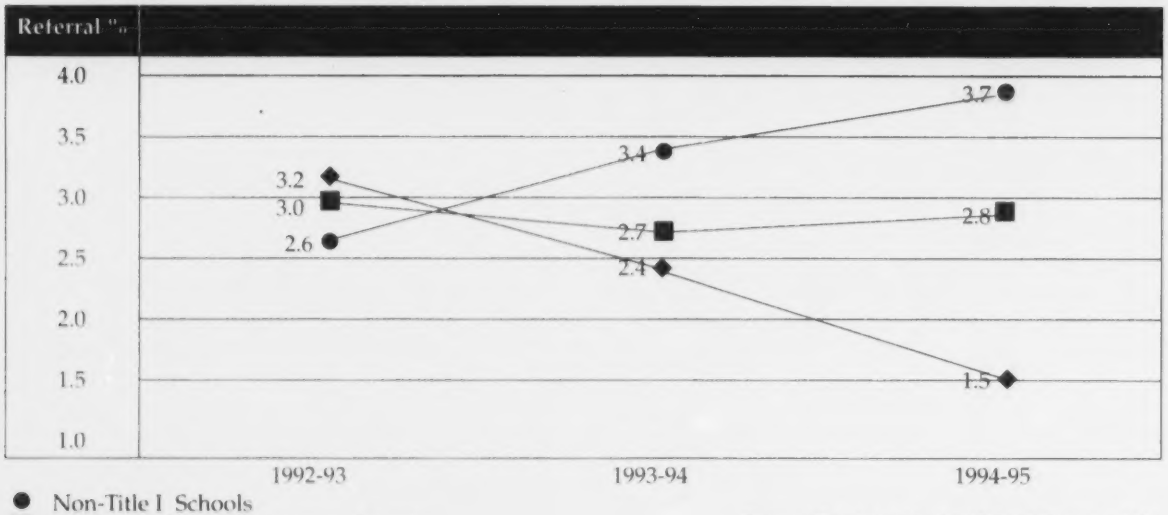
Comparison of First Grade Text Reading Level Averages for Reading Recovery, CELL Year One (Team) and Year Two (Literacy Coordinator) Implementation Years*



✖ 94-95 Reading Recovery Implementation
● 95-96 CELL School-Based Planning Team Training
■ 96-97 CELL Literacy Coordinator Training

*Observation Survey
Milpitas (CA) Unified School District, 1997

Table 6
Comparison of Title I, Non-Title I, Reading Recovery, and California Early Literacy Learning Referrals to Special Education

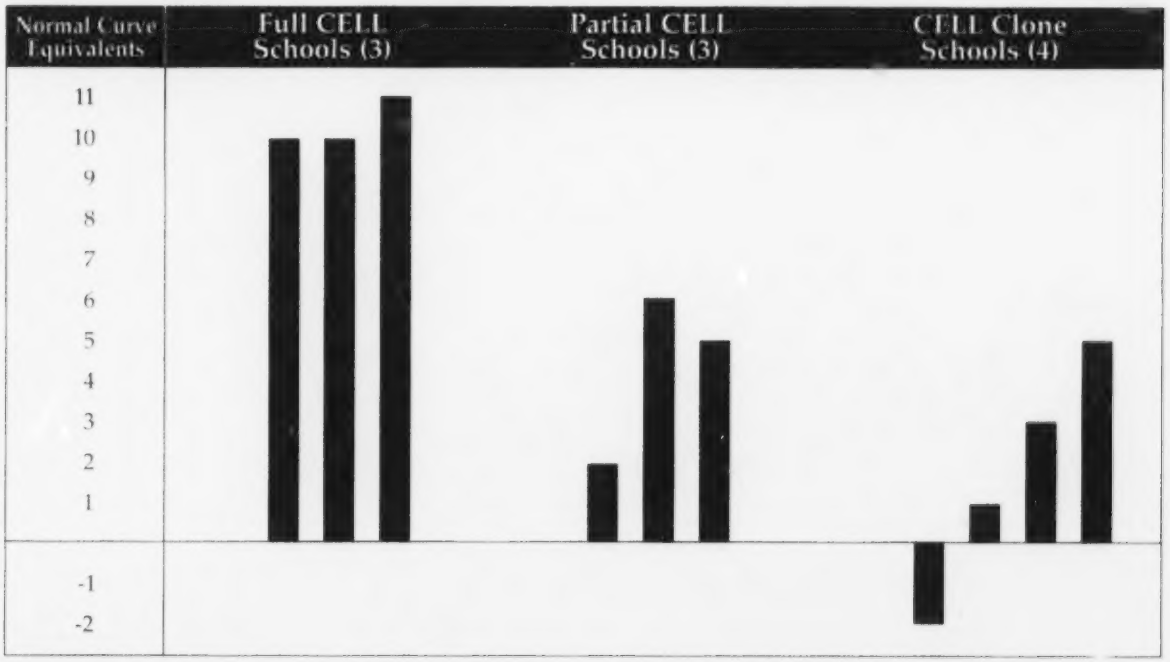


Colton (CA) Joint Unified School District, 1996

used a typical ability/achievement discrepancy determination to both establish and maintain eligibility. The children who exited made sufficient gains in reading and writing to fall below the threshold of eligibility. The decision to exit special education was also reviewed and endorsed by the staffing team. This exit from a special education resource room placement can be attributed to the use of more powerful teaching strategies and to the fact that special to regular class transition is facilitated by the alignment of teaching strategies when both regular and special education use the CELL framework.

One school posted a 25% exit rate from special education.

Table 7
California Achievement Test (CAT-5) Reading Comprehension Four Year Summary, Grades 1-4



Southern California CELL Pilot District, 1997

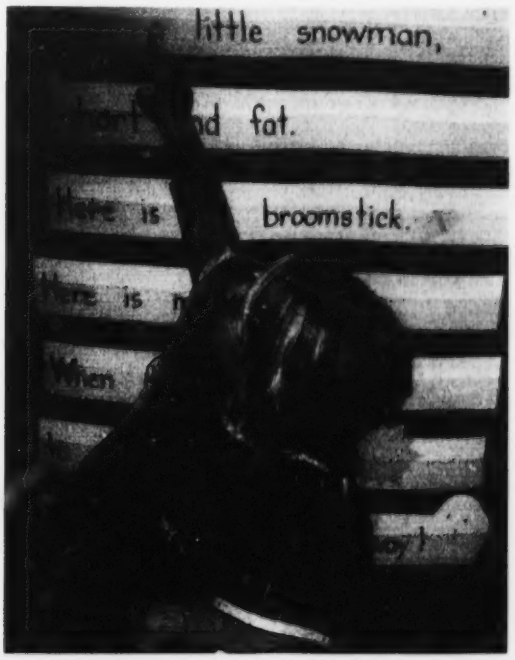


Table 7 compares achievement in grades 1-4 on the California Achievement Test (CAT-5) over a four year period. Schools who had full CELL implementation showed increases of 10, 10, and 11 normal curve equivalents in reading comprehension. Schools with partial implementation of CELL showed increases of 2, 6, and 5. And schools that participated in a district developed CELL clone had normal curve equivalent scores of -2, 1, 3, and 5. These data are a strong indication that program replication is affected by altering standards, procedures, or training.

"CELL and ExLL are the most professional training sessions that I have ever attended. They believe in the integrity of teachers."

Elementary School Principal

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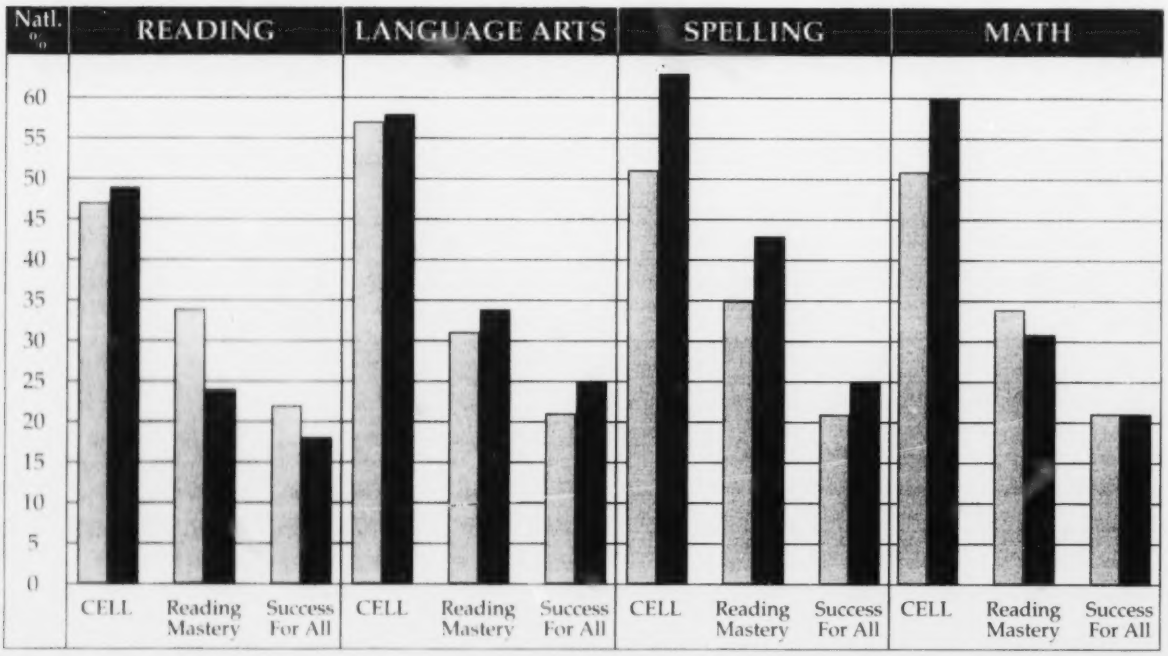
Tables 8 and 9 compare the SAT-9 scores in three Title I schools in a California district. Schools were in comparable implementation stages of Reading Mastery (Engelman et al., 1998), Success for All (Slavin et al., 1993), and CELL in Table 8 and ExLL in Table 9. CELL and ExLL posted higher scores in all categories measured (reading, language arts, spelling, and math). By comparison, CELL and ExLL support the development of independent decision-making by teachers where, Reading Mastery and Success for All are constructed to be more directive and scripted.

Table 8

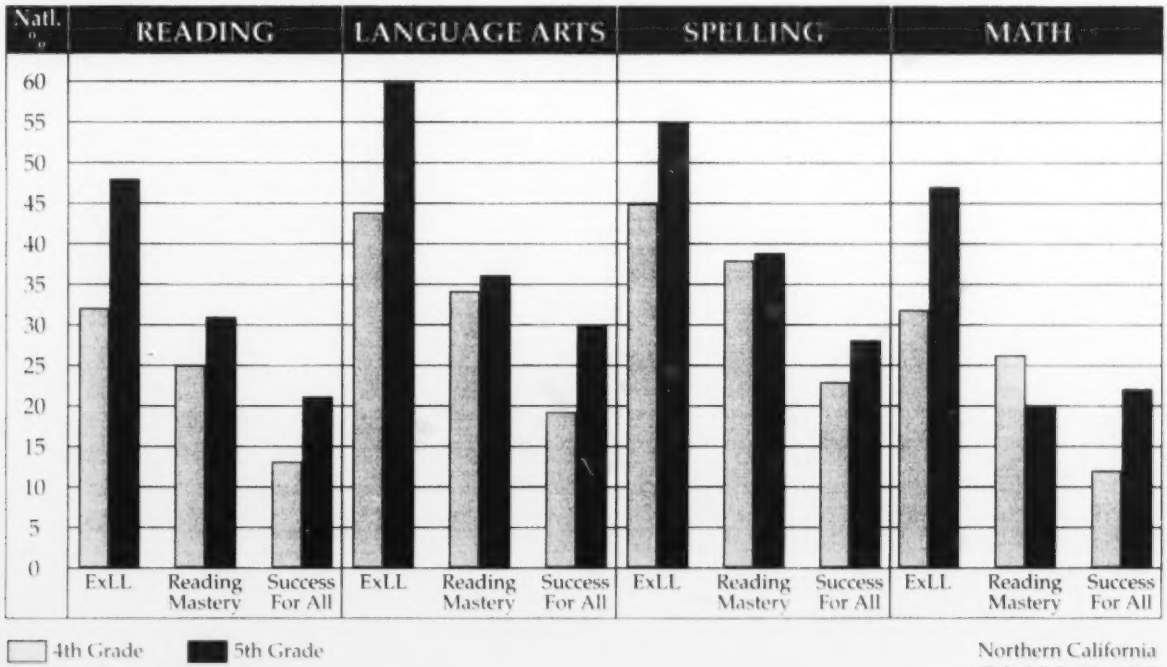
District SAT-9 Scores in Three Title I Schools Using California Early Literacy Learning, Reading Mastery and Success For All (2nd and 3rd Grade)*



Northern California
Title I Schools, 1998
*Stanford Achievement Test - Ninth Edition

Table 9

District SAT-9 Scores in Three Title I Schools Using Extended Literacy Learning, Reading Mastery and Success For All (4th and 5th Grade)*



Northern California Title I Schools, 1998

*Stanford Achievement Test - Ninth Edition

Summary

These studies demonstrate that CELL and ExLL are effective programs of professional development. The most important data are those that show good achievement gains in literacy in CELL and ExLL schools. Schools who have committed to training a Literacy Coordinator show greater gains than those who received only the School-Based Planning Team training. Both level of implementation and adherence to the model are seen as important variables.

The impact on special education was also measured in two studies. The savings that would result in the reduced referral to special education and special education exit would, by themselves, cover the cost of all CELL and ExLL training. This is a powerful measure of cost effectiveness.

This research provides strong support for the relationship between professional development for teachers and gains in student achievement.

IMPLEMENTATION

After two years of research and development, CELL was piloted in 1994-95 with the training of eight Literacy Coordinators and various demonstration classrooms in California. Training of both School-Based Planning Teams and Literacy Coordinators in subsequent years has been conducted in California, Hawaii, Wyoming, Mexico, Montana, and Utah. Schools from Arizona, Texas and Nevada have also been trained. During the past five years CELL has trained approximately 3500 teachers who have in turn provided instruction for more than 177,000 children.

Under development since 1995, ExLL conducted a training pilot in 1997-98 in Wyoming. Training of School-Based Planning Teams and a pilot Literacy Coordinator training were initiated in 1998-99 in California and Utah. ExLL has trained 678 teachers and impacted an estimated 18,000 children.

CELL and ExLL training site development is underway in Arizona, Kentucky, and Nevada. In addition to sites in Mexicali, Baja California and in Mexico City as Enseñanza Inicial de la Lectura y la Escritura, sites in other Mexican states are in preliminary stages. Discussions have also been initiated in Canada and Belize.

The implementation tables include yearly totals for teachers, teams, and Literacy Coordinators trained. The number of children impacted by CELL and ExLL is estimated both for each year and as an accumulative total.

Implementation of California Early Literacy Learning, CELL (PreK - 3)

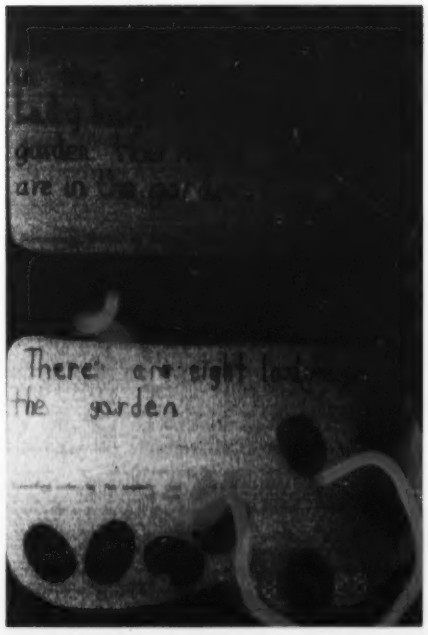
CELL	Teachers	School-Based Planning Teams	Literacy Coordinators	Children	
				Per Year	Grand Total
1994-95	-	-	8	200	200
1995-96	344	23	13	8,925	9,125
1996-97	604	43	23	15,675	24,800
1997-98	1084	78	33	27,925	52,725
1998-99	1452	99	56	37,700	90,475
TOTAL	3484	243	133	-	177,325

Implementation of Extended Literacy Learning, ExLL (3-6)

ExLL	Teachers	School-Based Planning Teams	Literacy Coordinators	Children	
				Per Year	Grand Total
1997-98	70	9	-	1,750	1,750
1998-99	608	76	3	15,110	16,860
TOTAL	678	85	3	-	18,610

New Initiatives

CELL and Math: Finding the Common Denominator is a two-day training workshop for teaching mathematics using the CELL framework. This inservice for Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers focuses on using reading and writing activities in the teaching of mathematics that meets the California mathematics academic content standards. Using literacy to support instruction in other content areas is also under development.



An institute for CELL and ExLL administrators has been developed to support principals in their role on the School-Based Planning Team. Emphasis in this two-day workshop is placed on developing a balanced reading and writing curriculum and classroom diagnostic tools, as well as the role of the principal in coaching and giving feedback.

A classroom intervention for children struggling with reading and writing is currently under development. Elements of the CELL and ExLL frameworks will be combined with other individual and small group strategies to provide extra assistance to children having difficulty learning to read and write. The model will give special consideration to children who have limited English proficiency or have had limited exposure to books, children who have specific learning problems, and children who are generally disadvantaged.

CELL and ExLL training staff and Literacy Coordinators have conducted awareness and inservice sessions throughout the United States. Internationally, the trainers have presented literacy learning research at conferences in Aruba, Australia, Bermuda, Belize, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Hungary, Jamaica, Mexico, and New Zealand.

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What Participants Say:

Classroom Teachers:

"I wish I had received this kind of training in college. All teachers should be trained in CELL."

"With all the elements being used, the children are receiving good first teaching."

"ExLL is finally something for us upper grade teachers. Thank you!"

"Teachers who participate in the CELL program do not stagnate. They are evolving. Looking inward, growing, sharing, changing, are all part of what it means to be a CELL teacher. The CELL Project, like life, changes. It is a process of total engagement on the part of all participants."

"CELL provided a framework with which I could teach according to my understanding of how kids think and learn. I watch my students making literacy connections daily. My students are learning at a pace I never imagined possible for at-risk kids."

"Through all the professional development and support from my Literacy Coordinator, colleagues, and site administrator, I have learned so much about the elements of CELL. As I continue to learn and use the elements, I am becoming more convinced that it works."

"ExLL has provided us with important tools to help intermediate grade children who are still struggling to learn to read."

"My first year at a CELL school was one of new learning, rethinking, and change. I admit I was very reluctant to change my way of thinking. However, given time, my Literacy Coordinator, guided meetings, professional growth, and the support of my peers, I have come to the conclusion that CELL has taught me how to teach!"

"Even special education is included. You could never have persuaded me that this kind of growth was possible."

Literacy Coordinators:

"Now that I have been in CELL (this wasn't true at first) my expectations have steadily increased and continue to rise, and also, my preconceived ideas (limitations) have been drastically decreased and continue to be reduced."

"CELL has developed among our teachers a common frame of reference as we discuss our students' growth and needs. We have also developed a much stronger and clearer sense of purpose and cohesiveness."

"CELL has changed my life. I will never be the same again and I certainly will never teach the same."

Principals:

"I am the principal of a large, urban, year-round school with 95 percent Title I-identified and 80 percent limited English proficient (students). . . I can see children achieving more and at higher levels than ever in the history of this school."

"CELL and ExLL are aligned perfectly. This will make all the difference."

"We are just starting CELL. I visited a CELL school and I would like to hire nine teachers just like the one I observed."

"The strongest effect of CELL has been the improvement in the regular classroom. The base program has improved 100 percent. Pull-out and push-in programs are no longer the first line of intervention-good first teaching is!"

"CELL and ExLL are the most professional training sessions that I have ever attended. They believe in the integrity of teachers."

"We are seeing amazing results in our students reading and writing abilities as a result of the CELL strategies."

Collaborations and Partnerships

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Springville Union School District

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Dear Dr. Swartz,

The ideas about which I am writing to you have been formulated over the past 8 months during which I have been participating in the CELL training as a member of my school's team. I have appreciated the pacing at which the various components of CELL have been introduced to us allotting time for experimentation and trying the new strategies to see how they merge with our own peculiar teaching styles. For me, personally, much of what I have learned has slipped on like a pair of comfortable, well worn slippers. As I evaluate my own growth and, more importantly, that of my students, I am most grateful for having been selected to receive training.

I am approaching my thirtieth year of teaching, about half of which has been special education. My special day class is comprised of third and fourth grade special education students with a range of handicapping conditions. So what I have deduced after these months of getting more into applying CELL methodologies is projected through the lens of a special education teacher.

All of the various sessions in our training have dealt with the specific academic CELL components. What I am seeing, however, is a most unexpected outgrowth of implementing these components. Yes, my testing, formally and informally, indicated that, indeed, growth is certainly happening academically. What I was not expecting is outstanding growth in the behavior of students. You know quite well that when students are in special education programs they are weighted down by deep feelings of having failed for reasons which are generally unclear to them. Additionally there are psychological issues that may come from their own failures, their parents/family disappointments. Initially students walk into a special education class fearful, wondering how badly they will fail again or what task they will be called upon to complete that will create feelings of shame, dismay, or embarrassment. My basic approach is to provide a trusting, nurturing environment where problems, difficulties and challenges are openly discussed but where personal achievement and group support are targeted as the key elements for success, and hence for growth. So here is what I see emerging, as a direct result of CELL implementation. I am finding a growing respect not only for themselves as students but for their fellow classmates as partners in achievement. I see more enthusiasm about learning and an eagerness to attempt new challenges. When was the last time it was a common question in a special day class, "Can we write in our journals again?" I see respect for fellow students to an extent that even little niceties like bending over and tying the shoelaces of another student who hasn't mastered that yet becomes almost a loving act that is done just because there is mutual caring and an attempt to problem-solve. By extension, it is almost commonplace for one of my students to help another student locate a word on the Word Wall, or hear another reading over a bit of creative writing and ask, "Does that make sense?" or "Does that sound right to you?" The interpersonal interactions are of a gentle but more confident nature. The anger of some has melted away and has been replaced with an increasing willingness to take a chance and to find support for that chance-taking from fellow students. For even the most learning disabled, attempting a challenge is possible because of the supportive camaraderie that is a direct outgrowth of working through interactive writing issues, or of having an "aha" realization in shared reading. That each student has begun to know that finding solutions is within his/her own grasp tremendously empowered each of them. Perhaps one might say that just as the Maria Montessori approach aimed at providing experiences for the young to gain mastery of much of their immediate physical environmental requirements, so have the CELL strategies given that same kind of empowerment to my special education students greatly enhancing their chances to be successful and self-satisfied.

I guess what I am trying to say is that the very nature of the various CELL strands opens the doors to this kind of behavior. For many regular education students and teachers, special education students pose a threat. However, if my students are soaring not only academically but socially and emotionally as a direct result of their new strength and confidence—call it ego strength—that CELL creates, then the implication through the eyes of special education is incredible when projected to the total school environment.

Rachel Krug
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